

from the State of Virginia, to perform the duties of the Chair.

ROBERT C. BYRD,
President pro tempore.

Mr. WEBB thereupon assumed the chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

SPENDING RESTRAINT

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I do not see the majority leader on the floor at the moment. I know we are not having morning business and are going straight to the farm bill, which I applaud. But I do wish to use a few minutes of my leader time at the outset of today's session.

Mr. President, the majority in the House of Representatives will soon propose a half-trillion-dollar spending bill. They have left it to the Senate to make sure the bill includes troop funding. We have another responsibility to keep in mind as we wait for the House to act, and that is our responsibility to the taxpayers.

Nearly a quarter of the way into the fiscal year, we are still 11 appropriations bills short. That is out of a total of 12. Eleven out of 12 have not yet been signed into law. We need to act on these and to do so in a fiscally responsible way that ensures they actually become law.

As I have said, and as we have all seen, there is a way to make law and there is a way to make a political statement. On these appropriations bills, the middle-class tax hike known as the AMT, the farm bill, the Energy bill, and FISA, there is a way we can get all of these done, and we know what that way is. The path forward is clear. The question now is whether the majority will take it.

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS DAY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, this is International Human Rights Day. I would like to take a moment to call attention to the tragic lack of human rights the world recently witnessed in Burma.

A few months ago, we watched in hope as pro-democracy activists took to the streets in quiet protest against the oppressive policies of the State Peace and Development Council.

Then we watched in horror as the Burmese regime showed its ugly face by putting down peaceful protesters, killing many, and leaving still more unaccounted for. Soon the sound of gunfire gave way to rumors of tortured prisoners and the rounding up of Buddhist monks who had sought nothing more than justice and peace and freedom.

Unfortunately, the news cycle also gave way to new stories and new im-

ages. A world that had been outraged about what it saw in Burma soon moved on to other pressing things. But the Senate has not forgotten. We are not fooled by SPDC's all-too-modest efforts at "dialog" with Aung San Suu Kyi, nor are the people of Burma, nor are the people of the world.

So it is my hope on this International Human Rights Day that the U.N. Security Council will this month turn its attention to consideration of an arms embargo on Burma. Burma faces no external threats. It uses its weapons not to defend itself but to maintain its grip on power and intimidate its own people.

Several weeks ago, Senator BIDEN and I introduced S. 2257, the Burma Democracy Promotion Act of 2007, which would further tighten U.S. sanctions on the SPDC. A companion measure in the House is expected to be considered soon.

It is my hope that in the very near future we can move to Burma sanctions legislation. In so doing, we would reaffirm this body's longstanding commitment to freedom and democracy in Burma.

Let's not forget the images that shook the world, nor the people who stood up against their oppressors, many of whom still suffer for the bravery they showed in those days.

On this International Human Rights Day, let's show them around the world we remember their struggle.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

FARM, NUTRITION, AND BIOENERGY ACT OF 2007

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.R. 2419, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 2419) to provide for the continuation of agricultural programs through fiscal year 2012, and for other purposes.

Pending:

Harkin amendment No. 3500, in the nature of a substitute.

Harkin (for Dorgan-Grassley) amendment No. 3695 (to amendment No. 3500), to strengthen payment limitations and direct the savings to increase funding for certain programs.

Brown amendment No. 3819 (to amendment No. 3500), to increase funding for critical farm bill programs and improve crop insurance.

Klobuchar amendment No. 3810 (to amendment No. 3500), to improve the adjusted gross income limitation and use the savings to provide additional funding for certain programs and reduce the Federal deficit.

Chambliss (for Lugar) amendment No. 3711 (to amendment No. 3500), relative to traditional payments and loans.

Chambliss (for Cornyn) amendment No. 3687 (to amendment No. 3500), to prevent duplicative payments for agricultural disaster assistance already covered by the Agricultural Disaster Relief Trust Fund.

Chambliss (for Coburn) amendment No. 3807 (to amendment No. 3500), to ensure the priority of the farm bill remains farmers by eliminating wasteful Department of Agriculture spending on casinos, golf courses, junkets, cheese centers, and aging barns.

Chambliss (for Coburn) amendment No. 3530 (to amendment No. 3500), to limit the distribution to deceased individuals, and estates of those individuals, of certain agricultural payments.

Chambliss (for Coburn) amendment No. 3632 (to amendment No. 3500), to modify a provision relating to the Environmental Quality Incentive Program.

Mr. SALAZAR. Mr. President, I would now like to return to the pending business, the farm bill, which we have now been working on in the Senate for a period of time.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The pending business is the farm bill.

Mr. SALAZAR. I will make a few general comments about the farm bill. It is a piece of legislation which is very important to the food and fuel security of this country. I have had the honor of working with Senator HARKIN and his leadership of this effort, along with Senator CHAMBLISS now, for at least 2½ years.

This legislation is truly historic for our country. Senator THUNE, who is on the floor with me this afternoon, has also been one of those champions in trying to be sure we get a good farm bill for the United States of America.

At the heart of this farm bill, we are talking about opening a whole new chapter for America. It is not just a new chapter for rural America, this is opening a new chapter for the clean energy future for the United States of America. And title IX of this legislation, which has been supplemented with the resources that are coming from the Finance Committee and the leadership of Senator BAUCUS and Senator GRASSLEY, will make this farm bill the best farm bill for the clean energy future of America we have ever had.

So it will open a whole new chapter of opportunity for America as we try to deal with those forces that have kept us addicted to the foreign powers that control the oil of this world. It goes beyond energy, in terms of the new chapter we open here. It also deals with conservation, where the additional \$4 billion or so that is in this legislation will help us embrace a new ethic forward in conservation; will make sure that that 70 percent of America which now houses the farms and ranches of America remains the kind of land and water we can be very proud of.

It is a very good bill in terms of conservation. It also is a very good bill in making sure the nutrition programs of this country are fully funded. We often remind the people of this country that even though it is called a farm bill, and people think about it as a bill that affects only rural America, it affects all